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ABSTRACT

This data sheet presents statistics relating to education of students with disabilities. Statistical highlights indicate that the number of students participating in federal programs for children with disabilities increased each year between 1977 and 1992, despite a decrease in elementary and secondary enrollment during the late 1970s and mid-1980s. Trends in disability classification and student placement are noted. A table presents the percentage distribution, and the percentage of total enrollment, of children (ages 0-21) served by federally supported programs for students with learning disabilities, speech impairments, mental retardation, serious emotional disturbance, and preschool disabilities, for the school years ending 1977 to 1992. Two graphs show trends in these data for selected school years from 1977 to 1992. (JDD)

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ED 379 854

Education of Students with Disabilities

February 1995

Indicator of the Month

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EC 303727

INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

February 1995

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Education of students with disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that all children have available to them a free and appropriate education designed to meet their unique needs. Changes in the number and distribution of students with disabilities affect the level of effort required of educators and policymakers to comply with the current law and help them to forecast future resources.

- **The number of students participating in federal programs for children with disabilities increased each year between 1977 and 1992, despite a decrease in elementary and secondary enrollment during the late 1970s and mid-1980s.**
- **In 1992, students with disabilities receiving services in federal programs equalled nearly 12 percent of all students enrolled in grades K–12.**
- **The percentage of disabled students identified as learning disabled rose 19 percentage points (from 22 to 45 percent) between 1977 and 1992, while the proportion identified as mentally retarded or with speech impairments fell 15 percentage points (from 26 to 11 percent and from 35 to 20 percent of the total, respectively).**
- **During the 1990–91 school year, 94 percent of students with disabilities were taught in regular school buildings. Of these students, 93 percent of those with speech impairments were taught in regular classrooms and/or resource rooms as compared to 17 percent of deaf-blind students. Fifty-eight percent of mentally retarded students were taught in separate classrooms as compared to 6 percent of students with speech impairments.**

Children from birth to age 21 served by federally supported programs for students with disabilities, by type of disability: Selected school years ending 1977–92

Type of disability	1977	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992
	Percentage distribution									
All conditions	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Learning disabilities	21.6	29.1	35.2	40.9	42.5	43.8	43.7	44.2	44.6	45.0
Speech impairments	35.3	31.2	28.2	26.6	26.1	26.0	21.5	21.0	20.7	20.0
Mental retardation	26.0	23.2	20.0	17.8	16.1	14.7	12.4	11.8	11.2	11.1
Serious emotional disturbance	7.7	7.7	8.4	8.3	8.6	8.8	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.0
Preschool*	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	8.7	9.1	9.3	10.0
	Number of children served as a percentage of total public K–12 enrollment									
All conditions	8.5	9.3	10.3	10.8	10.9	10.9	11.2	11.3	11.4	11.7
Learning disabilities	1.8	2.7	3.7	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.3
Speech impairments	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3
Mental retardation	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3
Serious emotional disturbance	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Preschool*	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2

*Prior to the 1987–88 school year, these students were included in the counts by type of disability. Beginning in the 1987–88 school year, states are no longer required to report preschool students (0–5 years) with disabilities by type of disability.

NOTE: Includes students served under Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA) and Part B of IDEA.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, various years.

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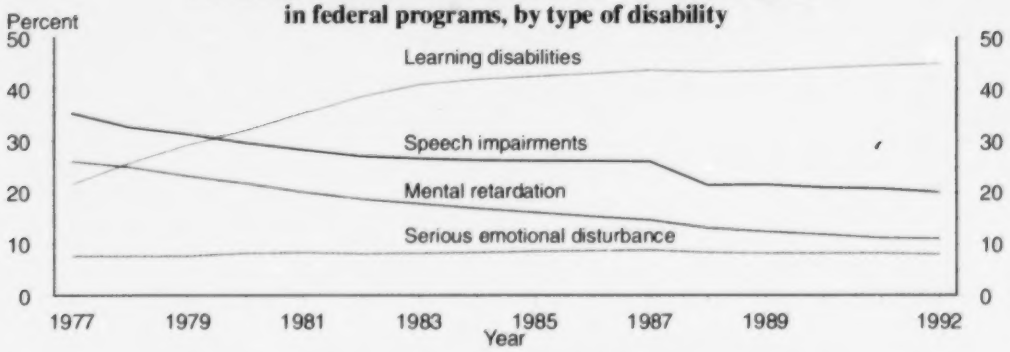
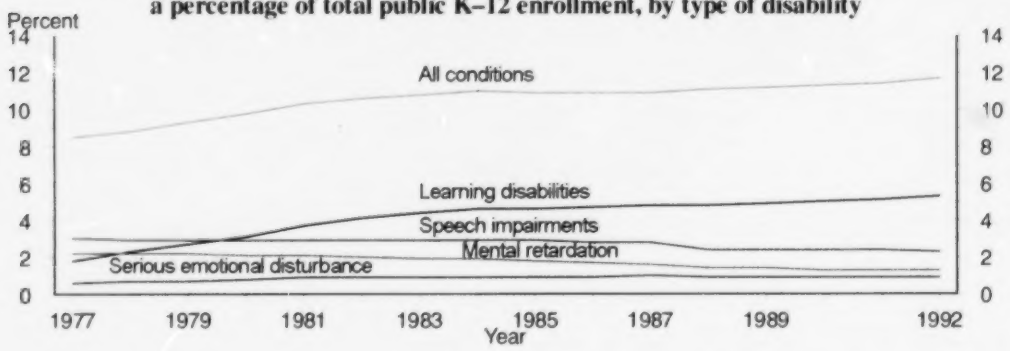
Children from birth to age 21 served in federally supported programs for students with disabilities: Selected school years ending 1977–92

Percentage distribution of children with disabilities served in federal programs, by type of disability



Number of children with disabilities served in federal programs as a percentage of total public K–12 enrollment, by type of disability



NOTE: Includes students served under Chapter 1 of ECIA and Part B of IDEA. Prior to school year 1987–88, preschool students were included in the counts by type of disability. Beginning in the 1987–88 school year, states are no longer required to report preschool students (0–5 years) with disabilities by type of disability.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, various years.

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